



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP


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Intervention sweet spot: gestation through age two



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

Whose lives we value and how those values are expressed in the world have been a hot topics this year in the United States. Globally, there is an opportunity to save millions of young lives every year. The World Bank, non-profits and government aid agencies are working together to end the deaths of young children from malnutrition and preventable diseases.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is refocusing its humanitarian assistance to concentrate on ending avoidable deaths of children and pregnant mothers. Already, the world has succeeded in

lowering the annual rate of preventable deaths of young children from 12 million to five million.

Recent research reveals that proper nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life pays a lifetime of dividends. Similarly, proper stimulation and education within the first eight years form the basis for lifelong success. A blue-ribbon panel of scientists, aid professionals and private sector experts are calling for a coordinated strategy that focuses existing resources on the interventions pointed to by scientific evidence to eradicate preventable childhood deaths and give every child a chance to reach their full potential.

There are currently 200 million children worldwide – including 61 percent of the children born in sub-Saharan Africa – whose mental and/or physical growth are stunted due to undernutrition. According to Shawn Baker, Nutrition Director of the Gates Foundation, 3.1 million of the 6 million preventable child deaths last year stemmed from undernutrition.

Baker characterized nutrition programs as “political orphans,” looked after by multiple organizations – among them the Department of Agriculture, the Health Department and USAID – and belonging to none. The Gates Founda-

tion joined Partners in Health, the John Megrue Private Equity Firm, former Senator and physician Bill Frist, and other non-profit, private sector and government experts as members of the ACES Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel that studied streamlining our aid programs to have maximum impact on ending child and maternal deaths.

The panel recommended that USAID assign a top administrator with the responsibility and authority to coordinate nutrition programs. It also advocated focusing resources on the five to seven programs that the data have shown to be most effective. The overall objective is ending child undernutrition by 2035.

The changes already implemented are on track to save 500,000 children by the end of this year. They will save millions more from growing up mentally or physically stunted. According to the CEO of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Alliance, Suprotik Basu, scrutiny and focus are especially important now as progress made in pursuit of MDGs four and five – reducing the annual under-5 mortality rate by two-thirds and reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters – has “picked the low-hanging fruit.”

Thanks to efficiency improvements made following a Gates Foundation-

funded audit of USAID, no new funding is currently needed for the Maternal and Child Health programs that will provide the United States’ share of funding to end preventable child deaths by 2035.

USAID and the blue-ribbon panel have called on Congress to direct USAID to solidify this restructuring so that the plan laid out can be executed efficiently over the next 10 years. The new bi-partisan Reach Every Mother and Child Act – recently introduced in the Senate (S. 1911) and expected to soon be introduced in the House – will hold USAID accountable for a smarter, more effective approach to ending preventable maternal and child deaths. The bill will maximize our investments, with returns measured in lives saved and healthy, prosperous communities.

I look for Senators Peters and Stabenow to co-sponsor this legislation soon and for Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and Congressmen Tim Walberg and Mike Bishop to follow suit once companion legislation is introduced in the House of Representatives. One needs only to listen to the depth of feeling expressed about the preciousness of the lives of minorities, the lives of all people and the lives of babies to realize that this legislation reflects the most deeply held values of our electorate.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Setting and achieving large goals together

by Susan Myers
UN Foundation Blog (July 6, 2015)

The United Nations released its annual report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) this summer, and it delivers a powerful message: When the international community takes action around a shared agenda, progress happens.

Launched by world leaders and the UN in 2000, the MDGs provided eight concrete, measurable goals to alleviate poverty and improve lives around the world by the end of 2015. Governments, businesses, civil society groups and individuals mobilized at local, regional, national and global levels to make significant gains.

With the headlines dominated by serious global challenges, it's easy to think that our problems are unsolvable. But the MDGs provide an important reminder that substantive change is possible when we act. Here are 10 highlights from the report:

FACT: From 1990-2015, more than 1

billion people moved out of extreme poverty and the share of people in the developing world living in extreme poverty dropped from 47 percent to a projected 14 percent.

FACT: The number of out-of-school children of primary school age has almost been cut in half since 2000, from 100 million children in 2000 to an estimated 57 million children today.

FACT: Since 1990, child deaths have been reduced by more than half. In 1990, 12.7 million children under age 5 died, and this year that number is estimated to drop to less than 6 million.

FACT: Maternal deaths have declined by 45 percent since 1990.

FACT: Between 2000-2013, new HIV infections decreased by approximately 40 percent.

FACT: From 2000-2015, more than 6.2 million malaria deaths were prevented, mostly of children under age 5.

FACT: An estimated 37 million lives were saved through tuberculosis prevention, treatment, and diagnosis solutions from 2000-2013.

FACT: Since 1990, 2.6 billion people have gained access to an improved source of drinking water.

FACT: The projected share of

see GOALS, page 3

Letter: The right to citizenship

Dear Editor,

Currently, every infant born in the USA is automatically granted United States citizenship (except those born to foreign diplomats stationed here). Conservatives are now proposing to end this free ride for foreigners. If this plan were enacted, it would create a new under-class – legalized slavery. America must continue its traditional march toward greater human equality.

Paul Lambert

Suitcase switch – making room for change



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Groundcover Contributor

I traveled to Ireland recently for a wonderful writing retreat on several islands off the western coast of the country. I signed up for this event nearly a year and a half before I left in late August. I was very excited when the time to take off finally arrived.

Since we were going to be in a location where it rains frequently, where it had been cool all summer, and where we would also be doing a good amount of hiking, my packing was focused. All that was needed was my journal, several pens, hiking boots, a rain jacket and rain pants, and layers of casual clothing to keep warm and dry. I packed

deliberately and carefully in a medium-sized bag that would roll easily over the varied, uneven surfaces that lay ahead. With the satisfaction of Goldilocks, I knew my suitcase was just right, its size neither too big nor too small.

My overnight flight was uneventful. The food was actually decent, and the movie selection helped me fill the hours in the air. Arriving in Dublin at 5:15 a.m., I swiftly made my way through customs and assumed my position at the assigned baggage claim carousel.

Early on, a piece of luggage went by me that looked like my bag, but it was bound up in a plastic bag. Mine was not. Some travelers wrap their luggage in plastic these days to protect them from the hazards of air travel. The second time the plastic-encased suitcase went by, I recognized a piece of my clothing spilling out from a bag whose zipper was now no longer functioning. Many of the contents had escaped from

the disabled piece of luggage into the surrounding plastic. On its third pass around the oval-shaped conveyor belt, I awkwardly scooped up the bulky plastic bag. A suitcase in plastic with no zipper and contents on the loose does not roll.

When I dumped the bag on the Aer Lingus Customer Service desk, the man who helped me was very nice. Neither he nor I could figure out how my busted suitcase ended up in a plastic bag from Korean Airlines. He cautioned me to check to make sure nothing was missing and then handed me a replacement suitcase from the airline. It was black like mine was but was too big and not as nice as the bag I was leaving in the trash pile.

I transferred everything into the new suitcase that I didn't really like and headed for the bus that would take me across the country to Galway. Settled in my bus seat, I briefly mourned the bag I had planned to travel with and then considered the possibility that the suitcase fiasco was an opening for me to reconsider the container into which I had placed this trip for months.

I, like many of us, often make plans for what lies ahead, so sure I can anticipate everything. In some seasons, a job vanishes, a relationship shifts, health status is suddenly different, or a promise isn't kept and nothing turns out as we expected. The containers into which we have poured our lives for the future long haul don't hold, and we find ourselves with a lumpy armload to fit someplace else.

Ironically, my now too-big suitcase held out the possibility for me to lighten up my expectations and set my course with a bit more uncertainty and open space for surprise. I still miss that suitcase that I liked a lot. However, what I learned when it was gone continues to unfold within me. It's not a bad idea for any of us to be mindful of how we are containing our lives and to remind ourselves that some of those containers will change, like it or not. The question is always about the manner in which we embrace what comes in the wake of the change, discovering containers we hadn't imagined or known. Just today, the message in my fortune cookie read: "Be prepared to modify your plan."

Setting goals together

continued from page 2

undernourished people in developing regions is expected to drop by almost half, from 23.3 percent in 1990-1992 to 12.9 percent in 2014-2016.

FACT: About two-thirds of countries in developing regions have closed the gender gap in primary education.

While we have made significant progress under the MDGs, the report also highlights where we need to do much better. Inequalities persist, with the poorest among us often left behind from the gains that we've made collectively. In areas including sanitation, gender equality, maternal and children's health, and access to family planning, we have a lot more work ahead of us.

In September, world leaders gathered at the UN to launch the next set of global goals that will follow the MDGs,

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is an opportunity to build on the progress we've made, apply what we've learned from the MDGs, and dig deeper to address the root causes of poverty and its connected social, economic, and environmental elements.

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote in the opening of the report, "Reflecting on the MDGs and looking ahead to the next 15 years, there is no question that we can deliver on our shared responsibility to put an end to poverty, leave no one behind, and create a world of dignity for all."

For more information on the UN Millennium Goals and to take action, visit the UN Foundation at www.unfoundation.org, and its partner institution, Global Citizen, at www.globalcitizen.org.

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Foster grandparents guide children and strengthen communities

by Alice Newell
Groundcover Contributor

There's an organization in Washtenaw County that builds bridges of hope between two generations. It fuses seniors and youth, resulting in life-transforming outcomes throughout the community. This non-profit association is the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP).

Foster grandparents volunteer in educational settings, making tangible connections between a child's learning at school and life beyond its walls. The learning barriers children face today can cement a community's future. However, taking the time to teach children well and help them maximize their potential can hold a neighborhood on course towards improvement.

The FGP is a nationally known service that has been in existence since 1968. In Michigan, the program is funded by a state government grant of the National Corporation of Community Service. It was introduced to the Washtenaw County region in 1962 and has operated in the area for over 47 years, providing volunteer service opportunities for senior adults who want to give back to their neighborhoods.

There are no specific educational background requirements to participate as a volunteer but there are conditional qualifications. The person must be 55 years or older. He or she must have a physical examination by their doctor and pass state and federal background checks. Lastly, the senior individual must meet certain low-income criteria.

FGP program director Sandy Bowers emphasized that there are no special skills required to become a FGP volunteer.

"Mature senior adults who want to make a difference in the lives of youth have a lot to offer today's generation. They are loving, kind, flexible, attentive individuals who often have a good sense of humor. These well-rounded, mature adults bring smiles wherever they're summoned to serve. They are able to commit to 20 hours a week. They possess people skills with a willingness to work with others to produce positive outcomes in youth," said Bowers.

In return for their commitment to help children, the Foster Grandparent Program offers some incentives to their volunteers, such as

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clothing assistance, extra liability insurance while on duty, help with transportation, travel reimbursement, plus an offset tax-free stipend of \$2.65 cents per hour. FGP volunteers also can receive an annual physical checkup at the expense of the organization.

Before going to their sites, senior adults are trained by the organization's staff on how to assist youth reach their best potential. They also learn the rules and regulations of the Foster Grandparent Program. Once the adults have completed their training, they are assigned to different volunteer sites throughout the Washtenaw County region. FGP volunteers are appointed to many locations such as Head Start centers, primary and secondary schools and other education-based organizations whose focal point is helping youth learn.

The volunteers cover all subjects of learning and are there to guide whenever the need arises, reinforcing the process of education with a compassionate approach. Daily, each FGP volunteer reports to the office of their assigned placement and receives a list of four to five children to collect and assist for the day. After gathering the youth, the volunteer escorts them to study areas where they have direct interaction with the children. Normally, it's a quiet, less distracted setting where a child can focus better on lessons. This is where the magic of learning occurs.

Senior adults have a "milk-and-cookies" approach of bringing the best out of children causing smiles to glisten across the face of youth as they foster their ability to learn. Grandparents have a knack of setting off the spark of the excitement within a child, making

studying fun. Youth take the lead in the process of learning, while the senior plays the role of a guide as the children discover their own potential.

Caroline Thompson, principal at Perry Early Child Development Center of Ypsilanti, said, "The FGP volunteers offer a caring and compassionate approach of reinforcement to the process of learning. It's the extra classroom help and emotional support which positively impact a child's life. Secondly, FGP volunteers are seen as good role models from another generation implementing values of respect for the teacher and others."

The principles that the older generation teach upcoming youth – such as family values and perseverance – can be applied at school and all areas of the students' lives. Who better to emphasize this than grandmas and grandpas?

Rashawda Miller, a teacher at Perry, explained how "the extra pair of hands helps out greatly. In most instances, the FGP volunteers are the only grandparents some students have access to, filling a void and making a positive reflection on a child."

Words of wisdom from senior adults make the application of learning useful for students who have the privilege of hearing stories of people with rich life histories. As mature individuals explain their experiences of past events, the children's faces light up with interest. Seniors are a treasure trove of good cookies waiting to be discovered and handed out to whomever will listen. Children, on

the other hand, are cups of milk soaking up the rich history that seniors have to offer.

The Foster Grandparent Program values all children when it comes to learning. Even youth who are in a crisis can be reached by the FGP volunteers. Examples of FGP's relentless efforts can be seen at the SafeHouse and The Washtenaw Juvenile Detention Center of Ann Arbor. At these facilities, the FGP provides mentorship and emotional support to youth.

The Foster Grandparent Program holds in-service workshops to keep their seniors up-to-date on the routine and emergency procedures that might come up in their volunteering. Also, the volunteers learn how to assist children to overcome barriers and keep striving to receive an education. The volunteers learn how to minimize youths' stress and maximize their learning potential.

There are benefits to both the child and the adult. The National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors conducted a survey in 2014. The survey results showed improvements in physical and mental health for their volunteers. It also showed how fulfilling the needs of others helped restore their sense of purpose. Data is collected at the beginning and end of each year. Evaluations and reports are given monthly and annually to monitor the positive impact on both students and seniors. FGP hosts a banquet annually in April to recognize and honor the efforts of their volunteers.

The FGP is in desperate need of more male role models who are willing to meet the challenge of working with youth. To become a part of the FGP volunteer program, senior adults may call Sandy Bowers at (734) 544-6747 or email her at bowersk@washtenaw.org, or visit FGP at the Office of Community and Economic Development at 415 W. Washington Ave. in Ypsilanti.



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How to avoid being scammed



by **Angie Martell**
Groundcover
Contributor

A scam can happen to anyone. Scammers have gotten very sophisticated and elaborate and can prey on all of us. Like master pickpockets, scammers are doing their utmost to obtain your financial information and your money. Scammers are often hard to detect because they can be so believable.

The objective of any con game is to lure an unsuspecting person to part with their money, information, or other items of value. Most con games are initiated by people who approach potential victims on the street, on the phone or through the internet.

ALWAYS BE SUSPICIOUS of any plan, idea, scheme, business deal or proposition that requires you to provide money on short notice.

One common scam is that the caller or the email you received states that they are from a local service provider, such as DTE, and they inform you are delinquent on your bill and unless you pay immediately in the next two hours your service will be shut off. They tell you that you can pay immediately with cash or credit card. They even give you a bogus 1-800 number to call to verify.

Other common schemes are telemarketing fraud. Telemarketing fraud can come in the form of sweepstakes, prize calls, credit repair schemes or investment rip-offs.

The web is increasingly being used to commit fraud and identity theft. Scammers use e-mail, text messaging, and social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Even the IRS is not safe. Scammers have even posed as the IRS. Common email tricks include using the official IRS logo, whole sections from the IRS website, and forms similar to those the IRS uses to inform taxpayers they owe money and must pay immediately. Remember: the IRS never initiates emails to taxpayers.

Scammers prey on our fears. They prey on our willingness to try to do the right thing.

NEVER GIVE OUT PERSONAL INFORMATION like your social security number, bank account or credit card numbers either over the Internet or via a telephone call to someone you do not know.

Federal and State laws prohibit unfair or deceptive trade acts or practices, thefts, and larcenies. However, it may be difficult obtain your money back or to bring a scammer to justice because they use very elaborate deceptions. That said, if you are a victim of a scam you should always report the scam to your local police department, as well as the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Michigan Attorney General.

SIGNS THAT YOU MAY BE GETTING SCAMMED

- Beware of unsolicited home repair people. If you need the services of a repairperson, check to make sure they are licensed.
- Beware people posing as Utility Company employees. Contact the utility company if an employee wants to enter your home.
- Urgency – The tone of the email or call is urgent. The call or email insists that you must take action immediately.

On the Internet:

- Sensitive Information Requests – Requests asking for sensitive in-

formation from you. In some cases, they may have some information about you from public sources and are asking you to verify it.

- Sure-fire guarantees – Promises to make your life better. Example: "You can make \$1,500 a week sitting in your own home on your own time!"
- Disembodied Links – Links that only appear in the content of an email, hyper-linked text, shortened links that don't show the entire web address.
- Inordinate number of Recipients – An email that seems to be sent to a large number of people but sent to you personally.
- Vague, Generic, or Non-existent subject lines – If an email from an unknown address without a clear subject line shows up, do not open it.
- Grammar & Spelling – The email seems from a reputable company like FedEx or UPS but contains spelling or grammar errors.
- Intense Enthusiasm – Aggressively enthusiastic language and extensive use of caps-lock.
- Strange requests – Solicitations asking for strange things like medical assistance and financial help. Example: the email of an acquaintance that says she is traveling on vacation and was robbed and now is stranded and needs a \$500 loan from you.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE BEEN SCAMMED

1. File a police report. Scamming is a crime. If it happened to you, it can happen to someone else.
2. Contact Michigan Attorney General's Office, Consumer Protection Division.
3. For Internet and Identity Theft, contact the FBI as well as local police.
4. If your credit card has been compromised, contact your credit card company or bank.
5. Update anti-malware software on your computer. When you opened that scam-related e-mail, there may have been embedded links to malware within the message, which could have infected your computer, capturing your account information and relaying it back to the scammers. Make sure your anti-malware is up-to-date and do a full scan of your computer.
6. Request a Security Freeze on your Credit Reports. All three major national consumer-reporting companies now offer security freezes. A security freeze blocks access to your credit report by third parties without your express authorization. The exceptions would be existing creditors, collection agencies, and law enforcement agencies.

Phone calls offering free medical devices

An older adult reported receiving a phone call solicitation from an individual who claimed to be from the American Institute on Aging. The individual talked to the senior about how adults over 65 are at most risk for falls and then proceeded to try and sell the older adult a free medical alert device. The individual stated the Area Agency on Aging had medical alert devices and that the value of these devices was \$400, but it would be free along with a prescription card that could be used at drugstores.

The individual then verified the senior's address and **asked for a credit card number** so they could send the device to the senior and charge a fee of \$34/month. The senior properly responded that she did not provide her credit card over the phone and rebuffed the caller's attempts to reassure her of the safety of doing so.

The company responsible for this alleged scam, Lifewatch, is currently under investigation by the Federal Trade Commission.



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Meet Raina James – vendor, musician, TV show inspiration

by Susan Beckett

Those of you who read the story about Felicia Wilbert in the July issue of Groundcover already know that her daughter, Raina, has been recovering from a horrific shooting incident that occurred in Detroit. What you probably don't know is that the title character in the TV show Nashville was named after our Raina!

One of the show's writers attended Dondero High School in Royal Oak with Raina. She contacted Raina while writing the pilot and asked if she'd mind if they used her name for the country-singer star of the show. Raina, with her characteristic generosity, readily assented.

Our Raina performs as Opulence Wade and has an album she recorded while recovering that is currently in post-production and is expected to drop in October. She and two other musicians have recently formed the group G.I.Y.A. Erh and are working on recording projects together. Raina can sing soprano, alto and tenor. She also composes and arranges music, does sound engineering and handles the business side of music production. Visit the Groundcover News Facebook page or website to hear some of Raina's songs.

Much improved since her trauma, Raina recently shared about her path to musicianship. It began when, as a nine-month-old baby, she discovered the cabinet of pots and pans in her grandmother's new townhouse. She'd climb in and sit there drumming on the pots and hiding. At 15 months, she entertained the family by singing a ditty she recalls as "Butterscotch." Rhythms pulsed through her three-year-old body as she sat astride her grandmother's boom box, though it eventually broke as she bopped along to the sound. Her grandmother responded by buying a piano and redirecting Raina's musical focus. Raina's cousin wrote the letters A-G on the corresponding piano keys and Raina started teaching herself to play and read music.

Raina's grandfather, Reverend Samuel Turner, Sr., was the senior minister at the Mayflower Missionary Church in Detroit. Raina was baptized there when she was five and her uncle Terry, the Reverend Mincy, arranged soon after for her to sing in the choir. As she was dependent on adults to drive her there, she could not always get to rehearsal and was kicked out. In response to Raina's extreme distress, her Aunt Sandra interceded and chided the choir, "Let her sing – she knows all the words!"



Vendor Raina James is back to making music as she recovers from her trauma.

The choir relented and Raina not only sang with them for years, she also accompanied them on keyboard. Raina helped form a church youth choir for teens and a children's choir when she was only 10 years old herself. They practiced with percussion performed with silverware on ice cream buckets and ashtrays, accompanied by Raina on keyboard. Her grandmother dedicated a lot of time to fostering this project while her grandfather guided her and prophesied, "Your eyes will see all around the globe."

The journey he predicted began when 12-year-old Raina was among local youth invited to sing gospel songs on *Youth Ministries*, a local TV show. She also began a four-year modeling stint with the Sean John clothing line at that time.

Big changes occurred when Raina was 16. Reverend Turner elected to move to Atlanta, Georgia and Raina's mother, Felicia, accompanied him. Not wishing to move south, Raina and her grandmother remained in Detroit. The dynamic choir at the Greater Emmanuel Church drew Raina there. She also started singing secular music – rhythm and blues, hip-hop, rap, and country. She sang backup for other groups and sold one of her beats for a commercial.

Meanwhile, Felicia was in a bus accident and returned to Detroit to recover when Raina was 18. Observing that the local music scene came with some dangerous norms to which Raina was succumbing, Felicia intervened. Raina had been expelled from high school for

fighting and was selling – but not using – drugs.

Raina describes her mother as "a dedicated woman and awesome person. She made sure I wouldn't want or need for anything in life. She gave me love, spirituality, attention... She believed in me."

As the oldest child charged with helping care for her younger siblings, Felicia never finished school herself. She was determined that Raina would not be held back by a lack of education. Raina had received her GED at 17 but lost the certificate. When she tried to get another copy, she learned that the grant-

ing institution had been a fraud. Thanks to Felicia's insistence, Raina attended the Highland Park Career Academy and received her diploma when she was 21, while simultaneously establishing herself in the local music scene.

Felicia designated some of the money received as a settlement from the accident to pay for a college education for Raina, though Raina was happy with the life she had. Raina says, "My mom kicked my behind to get me out and going to college – literally. I wore a black eye to my first semester at Blue Sail University."

Four years later, at age 26, Raina emerged with dual degrees in Music Production and Entertainment Business. Armed with an education and talent, she felt ready to support herself and start a family. She picked a man to father her child and was delighted when her son Malachi was born. It was on a visit to introduce the baby to the Detroit relatives that the shooting occurred.

The shooter is still at large and Raina suffers anxiety and nightmares. She hopes they will subside upon her impending return to Florida where she will mentally and physically heal, pursue music, look into modeling for Malachi and reunite Malachi with his father.

Kickin' it Old-School!

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*Items shown are representative of typical sale items, not actual inventory.



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SWAT's doing in Ann Arbor?

by Martin Stolzenberg
Groundcover Contributor

I came across a strange sight one sunny July day while driving along a main street of Ann Arbor. There, holding up the traffic, while it slowly backed into its unmarked garage, was a United States Army Armored Personnel Carrier (APC). I recognized it because I had driven such a vehicle, courtesy of Uncle Sam, in the prehistoric time of the Cold War – that is, in the 1960s. It still looked pretty much like a tank. Alongside it was a large, double-trailer flat-bed truck. I assumed the truck went along to *shlep* the APC on trips. There they were, right in the midst of charming Ann Arbor.

My curiosity was raised. So I decided to do a little research, figuring it was probably the National Guard or a Reserve outfit. I found out differently. An article on the web by *mlive.com/RealMedia* reported on August 20, 2014, "The Washtenaw County SWAT team and the County Sheriff's Office conducted a regular training exercise at the Washtenaw County Trial Court Wednesday morning, catching eyes with the mine-resistant vehicle parked on Fourth Avenue... Armed officers in army-green camouflage uniforms entered the building holding rifles, being greeted by bemused attorneys and visitors to the courthouse."

The article drew pages and pages of overwhelmingly negative comments to the website, such as, "I find it ironic [that] the location of the founding of the Peace Corps feels the need to put military equipment on the streets. Has Ann



The Armored Personnel Carrier transports the officers and tows the flat-bed truck that carries its tank-like partner-vehicle.

Arbor become a war zone? Are there mines in the streets?" Or, "What I don't think any township, city and county needs is a military force equipped with APCs and warrior cops." Or, "So when do we need our 'Protect and Serve' employees to become a para-military group?"

SWAT stands for Strategic Weapons and Tactics. You've seen them in loads of TV shows and films. Here is what the Sheriff's Department had to say about it on its website: *"Team may include anti-sniper tactics, anti-terrorist tactics, barricaded subjects, and apprehension of armed and/or dangerous persons, executions of search warrants in hazardous situations, crisis situations and hostage rescue operations, dignitary protection, and other situations which may require special training and expertise."*

The latest publicly reported SWAT incident occurred here in Washtenaw County in December, 2012. A local man was reported to have barricaded himself in his home with a rifle and was intending to kill himself. A SWAT team was called in. After several hours of negotiating, the team broke in to the home behind a blinding hand grenade. The individual was found curled up in the basement. By the way, he didn't have a rifle.

So, two-and-one-half years ago there was a minor incident that made the papers and the internet. While there have been others, they were considered even less newsworthy than this little incident.

In a communiqué from the Washtenaw Metro SWAT team to Groundcover News on September 16, 2015, it was reported that in the first eight months of 2015 in Washtenaw County there had been eight incidents that required the SWAT team activation. Two were for barricaded individuals, four were for search warrants and two involved providing tactical support for special events.

It was further stated that there are 27 men employed in the unit, all part-timers. The total cost to the community is a modest \$35,000 a year. In order to minimize potentially violent conflict situations, the SWAT team in Washtenaw County works hand-in-hand with the Metro Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT).

The local Team Commander, Lieutenant Jim Anuskiewicz, says there are three things the public should be aware of regarding the SWAT team unit:

The Washtenaw Metro SWAT and CNT teams exist to provide the rapid response of specially trained personnel, equipment and other resources to

special or unique community threats where the needs exceed the capability of the standard police patrol response.

Integrating team and personnel from five different agencies has both reduced overall costs while increasing our ability to effectively respond to very difficult, threatening circumstances.

Our desired outcome is always the peaceful resolution of serious conflicts that threaten the safety of the communities we serve.

Around the country it is another story – excessive force and military tactics. SWAT teams started out in Los Angeles in the 1960s in response to the Watts riots over the attack of an African-American by police. SWAT teams spread over the years to a point where 80 percent of cities with populations of 25,000-50,000 have their own team, as was reported in the *Wall Street Journal* of August 7, 2013.

Not only are they in cities, but government agencies now have their very own SWAT teams. This includes: the Department of Agriculture, Railroad Retirement Board, Tennessee Valley Authority, Consumer Products Safety Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Starting in the 1970s, SWAT teams carried out about 3,000 raids per year. These teams carried out over 50,000 raids in 2005, according to Peter Kraska, a criminologist at Eastern Kentucky University. There are now around 80,000 a year, according to *Freedom Outpost* of June 26, 2014.

The reason we don't hear about them is that they are probably overwhelmingly related to drug search warrant raids. Some of these military types break down doors looking for a few ounces of what-have-you to carry out arrests that President Obama and our Justice Department are trying to get away from.

The reason why SWAT teams became so big is a little-known directive: Defense Department Section 1033. Instituted in the early 1990s, this called for the government to begin providing surplus heavy-duty military equipment to cities – for free. The government even started to ship new weapons starting in the 2000s. This mushroomed so that as of 2014, the cumulative government give-away was over \$50 billion worth of these military toys, as stated in *Newsweek* of August 13, 2014.

For example: the far-reaching program allowed the town of Rising Star, Texas,

see SWAT, page 11



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Saturday

5:00 p.m.

Sunday

7:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 12 p.m. & 5 p.m.

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	4				5			7
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Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote:

UONH UBSS PRX
TPHETBNHTNE KXPU EP
VNHCNX VOYV UN UBSS YTV
VP ZXNLNHV ORQYH QBENXI
XYVONX VOYH YLNHKN BV?
— NSNYHPX XPPENLNSV

Clue: L = A

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:
contact@groundcovernews.com
734-707-9210

ACROSS

- Musical of the Cardinals
- Ness or Lomond
- Tiny particle
- Florence's river
- Currency units
- Extinct bird
- Seaside
- Committed a traffic violation
- Grommet
- Botanical invader
- Compass abbreviation
- Internet data feed (abbr.)
- Derek and Diddle
- Actress Witherspoon
- Maritime
- Animosity
- _____ Romeo
- Greek village
- Actress Shearer
- Little _____, cartoon character
- Happen intermittently
- 20 quires
- Demean
- Actor Paul
- Volcano
- Initializes
- Carbohydrate
- Despises
- Degree (abbr.)
- Unit of energy (abbr.)
- Take by force
- Singer Guthrie
- Constellation
- Actor Dixon
- Grand total
- Stride
- Lampoon
- Electronics manufacturer
- Actress Sommer
- Peasant
- Actors Beatty and Eisenberg

DOWN

- Carpenter, sometimes
- Boards for carrying
- Pot contributions
- Playwright Coward
- Residual
- Pronoun
- Bird's cry

Side by side

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58	59			60			61		62		63
64			65		66		67				
68				69						70	
71						72				73	

- Whetstone
- Commercial messages
- Information class
- Poems
- Most common value, statistically speaking
- Adjust the direction of
- Singer McEntire
- Actor Cain
- Oregon city
- Noisy slumberer
- Queasiness
- Mathematical set
- Arabian country
- Hindu deity
- Winged
- Grease
- Narrative device

- Dawn
- Immediately
- Woman's nickname
- Eastern Europeans
- Singer Levine
- Makes a mess
- Actress Fanny
- Adjusted the pitch of
- Consumers
- Mature
- Elliptical
- Tribal neighbor of the Missouri
- _____ Bator, Mongolian capital
- Formerly called
- One of King Arthur's knights

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond



Bethlehem
United Church of Christ
423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-665-6149

Bethlehem Church is the home of the Groundcover office

Sunday Worship Times
8:30 am and 10:00 am

Summer Sunday school at 10:15 am
Fellowship Hour follows each service

October Community Events – Welcome!

- Oct. 2 (Fri.) Sauerkraut Supper, 6pm, buy tickets at church office
- Oct. 3 (Sat.) Choral Concert, 8pm, Across the Baltic Sea
- Oct. 4 (Sun.) Heritage Sunday Celebration, 10am in the Sanctuary
- Oct. 4 (Sun.) Blessing of the Pets, 2:30, in our backyard
- Oct. 17 (Sat.) German Pretzel Sales, 10:30am-12 noon, \$1 or \$10 dozen
- Oct. 30 (Fri.) German Pretzel Sales, 11am-2pm, \$1 or \$10 dozen
- Oct. 31 (Sat.) Concert, 8pm, in the Sanctuary
Victoria Fraser, soprano & Jeff Lewandowski, trumpet

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[www.youtube.com/user/
BethlehemChurchA2](https://www.youtube.com/user/BethlehemChurchA2)



bethlehem-ucc.org

Lifetimes

by Splashh
Groundcover Contributor

Lifetimes are lived between loves lost and loves come again.
struggling to meet those ends we pay a hefty cost
suffering never stops
it defines the hearts of men.
but champions dont always win
wann be boss never relent or give in to discouragement
we learn we defend that which we cherish we inherit
cultivate merit gain only to share it loose change spare it or
lose everything and never see it again. A noose hangs from
the chandelier
what class he had watch him disappear like a fad that
passed.
before its made crystal clear by the cold fact
they dont make chandeliers for the pen.
And you cant take it with you when you come to the end.
WATCH YOUR BACK
But dont run too fast or theyll try to shut you in
talk too loud if its true theyll stifle the dissent put a rifle to
his chin
bible in his hand
blind fold em show him
this the law of land
he wont know where hes going if he dont know where hes
been
those hip to the scam understand much of this world is a
distraction.
While the masses, at home relaxing lady liberty is blowing
in the wind.
Erosion is a process that takes over slowly
so you wont even notice when it happens till buildings start
exploding seeds planted we granted these snakes and these
fakes rights to ruin the planet when those towers came a
crashing thought you set them hens aloose no accident
they come home to roost
Little difference between pillagers and presidents
agenda takes precedence
power and control at the richest residents guarded so no
one sees the evidence ruining classes corrupted officials
hard to fathom things they're in to the extent they went
to so they could have us trapped in. it's an illusion their
powers imagined perceived as truer than granite but
thinner than fabric with laminate decorations. So any
punishment is not lasting one can take it. They like to think
freedom is a luxury lock us away as if we're ugly but theyre
the masked men. soon theyll call you enemy combatant. no
matter the color of a man skin.
You a soldier? No time for sitting on the damn fence.
THIS A CALL TO ACTION.

Knowledge is a weapon whos packing?

TSALAGI ROSE

by Dee Allen
Groundcover Contributor

*(For the students at Decolonize
Academy)*

Ever heard of the Tsalagi*
Rose?
Well, the U.S. government
Had gotten greedy
Again in 1828.
They found out
There was gold
Underneath the Southern
Land called Georgia.
Ten years later,
The U.S. Army
Was sent down
There to evict
The Tsalagi Indians
From mountain homes they'd
Held on to for
Thousands of years.
At gunpoint,
The only
Notice ever given.
The original
Gentrification.

The Tsalagi Indians
Were made to take
A long cross-country
Walk west, all 1,200 miles,
From Army stockades to some
Barren land, later called Okla-
homa.
Whole families marched
through
Mississippi winter snow
Without moccasins on their
feet.
Four thousand died from

Starving, freezing, disease.
Mothers cried for their young
As numbers of their tribe
Fell on the way westward.
Tribal elders saw that and
Asked the Great Spirit
High in Galunti** for a sign,
Anything to lift up the sad-
dened
Spirits of their women.

Each time a mother
Would shed her tears,
They'd feed the ground along
Nunna daul tsuny.***
Another trail would form:
A trail of snow-white ros-
es grew,
Starting from one, white as
tears,
An answer to the tribal elders'
prayers.
A sweet-smelling gift
From Pachamama.****
Something to show, across
Several states, that 10,000
Tsalagi Indians had survived
Genocide.
Now you know about the
Tsalagi Rose.
Old Indian legend. Real talk.

* What the Cherokee Indians
called themselves.
** Galunti: "Heaven"
*** Nunna daul tsuny: "Trail Of
Tears." Literal translation: "The
trail where they cried."
**** Pachamama: "Mother
Earth." Literal translation:
"World mother."

Memories of U-M football tailgating

by Aimee Ciccarelli
Groundcover Vendor #112

In the 1990s, my father – Thomas James Ciccarelli – owned a bar in Ypsilanti called The Spaghetti Bender. He also owned a catering business called Festival of Foods. Every Saturday home game for University of Michigan football, we catered a tailgate party for Georgia Pacific at Allmendinger Park.

These were some of the most exciting events I have ever been involved with. We had huge barbeque grills and a pavilion set up with giant stainless steel bowls full of potato salad and macaroni salad and cookies all in a pattern on a tray. There was hot apple cider and coolers full of soda. I worked with my son strapped to my back. (He's 16 now.)

You see, we were feeding 500 or more people and when they came before the game, they would trickle in 10 or 15 at

a time. But when they came post-game, they would come 500-strong – drunk and hungry. We would have those grills hot and ready, flipping burgers and chicken and hotdogs and salmon.

The people sat picnic-style and ate. Afterwards, they would get up and throw the football around and the kids would play. But no matter if Michigan won or lost – and, of course, they usually won – a good time was had by all. I will always cherish those football memories.

GROUNDCOVER Volunteer Meeting

Tuesday 10/6 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Groundcover office
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or call 734-707-9210

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and take the elevator to 'B'



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—MICAH 6:8

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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SWAT's doing in Ann Arbor?

continued from page 7

population 835, with one police officer to acquire \$3.2 million worth of military gear from the government over a 14-month period, according to the *Rutherford Institute* of August 5, 2014.

A *Freedom of Information Act* request shows our own Washtenaw County receiving an Armored Personnel Carrier valued at \$244,844 (probably the one I saw in the street that July day). We also own a multi-purpose vehicle (MPV).

There are many incidents reported of SWAT teams bursting unannounced into innocent homes, sometimes with disastrous results. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter counted at least 50 examples of such occurrences in an article dated August 7, 2013. In the same article, it reported that in 2006 some Tibetan monks who had overstayed their visas were caught in Iowa where the hapless holy men were apprehended by a SWAT team in full gear.

This is not to suggest that this type of occurrence or outlook is permeating Washtenaw County. The approach here

is clearly meant to be cautious, as indicated by the presence of the CNT. The cost is certainly modest.

But asking some people around town about the presence of a SWAT team drew incredulous looks of disbelief. Once they knew about it, responses were uniformly negative.

"Those were the storm trooper types in Ferguson, Missouri when people were protesting the police shooting," commented one person.

In a time when concern over excessive use of force by police is so prevalent in our society, it would serve the Washtenaw County law enforcement agencies to better communicate the presence of the SWAT team in the community, its role and purpose.

People might otherwise people think, "The SWAT team is just another signal of excessive police action, and used so infrequently, what do we need it for?" The answer is simple: for the same reason you keep fire extinguishers around. It is never used until you need it, and then you need it fast.

Domes to replace tents



A Seattle area homeless encampment that is part of that area's response to homelessness, Camp Unity, is evaluating structures from an Ann Arbor company as an alternative to tents. NewHouse Research and Design, with the help of Seattle area volunteers, set up one of their DecaDomes® for an open house at Redmond Unity Church in mid-August.

Camp Unity Eastside (CUE) is an independent, non-profit camp that rotates between local churches. It is one response to the approximately 3,000 unhoused people in the Seattle area and the commitment that Seattle and King County made to establish encampments and services for them. The Camp Unity Board invited NewHouse R & D to display a DecaDome® at the event, which also gave neighbors the opportunity to visit. The emergency managers of Seattle and Redmond were among the visitors.

"We are very excited at the possibility of using DecaDomes® as a humane, weatherproof alternative to tents," said Christina Yager, CUE treasurer. "We spend thousands of dollars a year replacing wet, moldy, torn tents – especially when we move locations."

NewHouse owner Eric Lipson is equally enthusiastic. "So far, people have really liked this model. We are looking forward to hearing what the Camp Unity

residents and the [wider] community think. That's the whole point of this exercise."

DecaDomes® are strong, lightweight shelters made of identical panels that can be assembled in a few hours with hand tools. They sleep four, weigh 500 pounds, and 12 flattened domes fit in a shipping pallet. Units come in three sizes: 80, 120 and 175 square feet, depending on panel width. Units can be easily disassembled, packed and re-located. "The DecaDome® we sent to CUE has already been deployed three times: to Washington, D.C., Ann Arbor and Canada," said Lipson.

"But shelter is only part of the housing equation," he continued. "Water and waste treatment, lights, cooking equipment, tools, blankets, and first-aid are all necessary. We can supply all or part of that, depending on the situation and the client. We can tune our building package to the climate, the conditions, and the specific needs of the end-user."

It seems that the folks in the Seattle area were duly impressed. When asked if they thought the DecaDome® was better than a tent, one of the residents said, "it's 10 times better than a tent." CUE has ordered one 10-foot-diameter unit to use as a model for fundraising. It will have two-inch-thick walls for extra insulation and an insulated floor and be made of three-foot-wide panels.


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Cryptoquote Solution

When will our consciences
grow so tender that we
will act to prevent human
misery rather than avenge
it?

— Eleanor Roosevelt

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Cream of Broccoli Soup



by Liz Bauman
Groundcover Contributor

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 cup sweet onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 3 cups vegetarian or chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 3/4 cup low-fat half and half
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/3 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

In a medium-size saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Sauté garlic and onion until tender. Add broccoli and broth to the saucepan, cover and simmer over low heat until broccoli is tender (15 to 20 minutes). Remove from heat and puree broccoli mixture in a food processor or blender until smooth. Return soup to saucepan. Dissolve cornstarch in the half-and-half and stir into soup. Return saucepan to to heat and stir constantly over medium-low heat until soup begins to thicken. Remove from heat and add salt, pepper and nutmeg. Garnish with a heaping tablespoon of shredded cheese.

So perfect on a cool, fall afternoon.

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Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2012 & 2015

So, should I go as a tiger or lion for Halloween this year?

Whatever!

You're just grumpy because everyone thinks you're dressed up to be a witch's kitty.

You mean black cat, right?

Yes! Sometimes Halloween is a chance to just be yourself.

Well, given that I'm an awesome black cat the other 364 days of the year, maybe my fans deserve something different?

What's your plan, then?

I dunno, I could dye my fur and go as you this year! Or maybe add some facial hair and go as a little black dog, homesick for Kansas.....

GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

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Business card	\$49.95	\$65.95	3.5 X 2
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1/4	\$159.95	\$215.95	5 X 6.5
1/2	\$299.95	\$399.95	5 X 14 or 10 X 6.5
Full Page	\$495.95	\$669.95	10 X 14

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